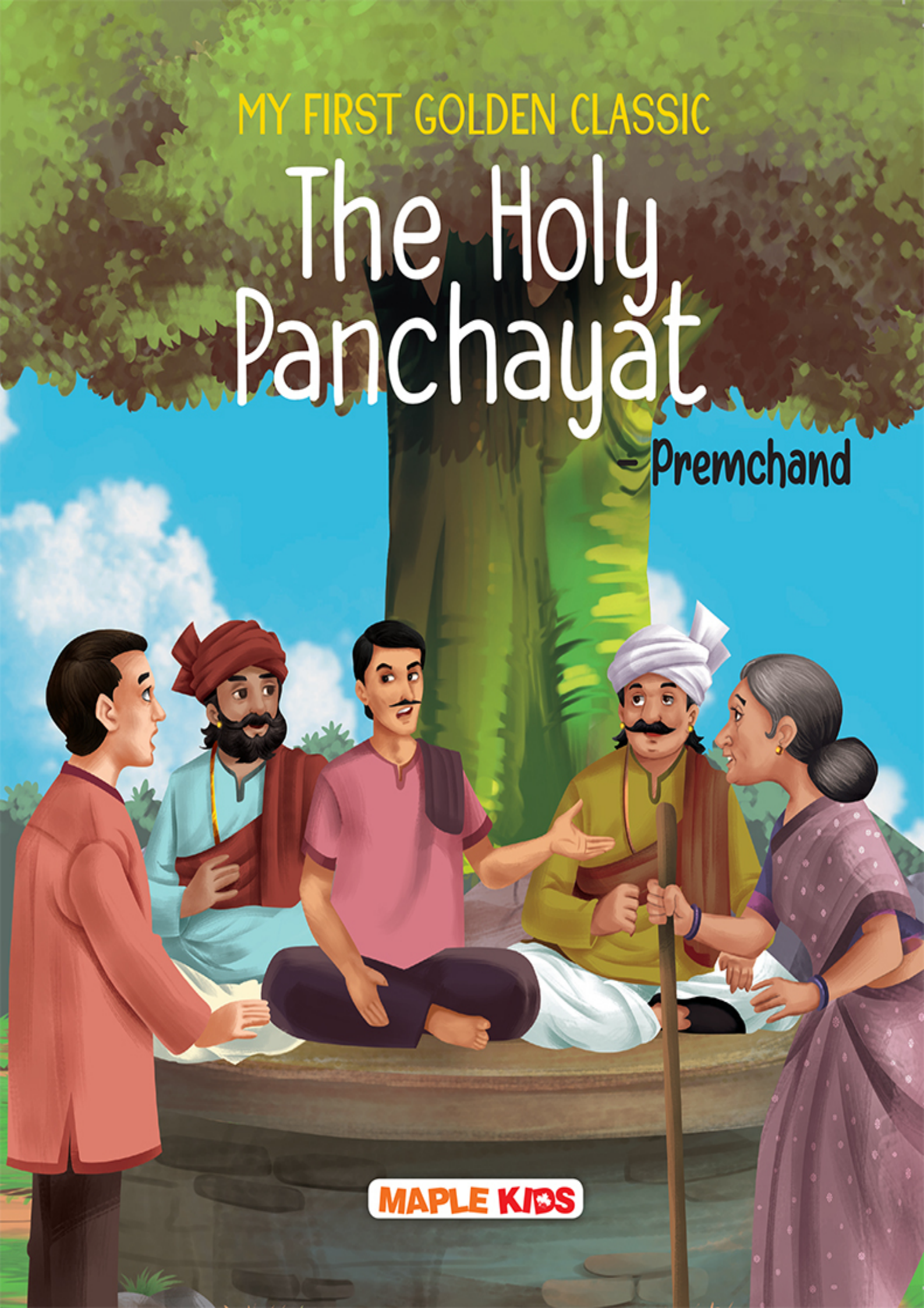
MY FIRST GOLDEN CLASSIC

The Holy Panchayat

– Premchand



MAPLE KIDS

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Jumman Sheikh and Algu Chaudhary were close friends. Jumman's aunt lived with him. It was decided that after the aunt's property was transferred to Jumman's name, he would look after her. But soon after the transfer, Jumman's wife started misbehaving with the aunt.

Unable to cope with circumstances, the aunt called for a panchayat. The aunt was told to choose the members of the panchayat. She decided to choose Algu as the panchayat head. When Algu declined due to his friendship with Jumman, the aunt told him, "Justice had no friends or enemies."

Algu agreed. After listening to Jumman and the aunt, he declared that the aunt be given a monthly allowance. He further stated that if Jumman failed to do so, the property would be returned to the aunt. Jumman was shaken at the decision and was very angry. He now wanted to take revenge on Algu.

Algu had a beautiful pair of oxen. But when one died, he was not able to find a replacement. So, he sold the ox to Sahu, a trader with a single-ox cart who used to carry products to and from the market. Sahu promised to pay the price within a month and took the animal home. But he was cruel to the ox and ill-treated it.

One day, on the way to the market, burdened with the load, the ox collapsed on the road. Sahu had to spend the night there itself. But when he woke up the next morning, he saw that his goods and money were missing. Over the next several months, whenever Algu asked for money, Sahu made excuses.

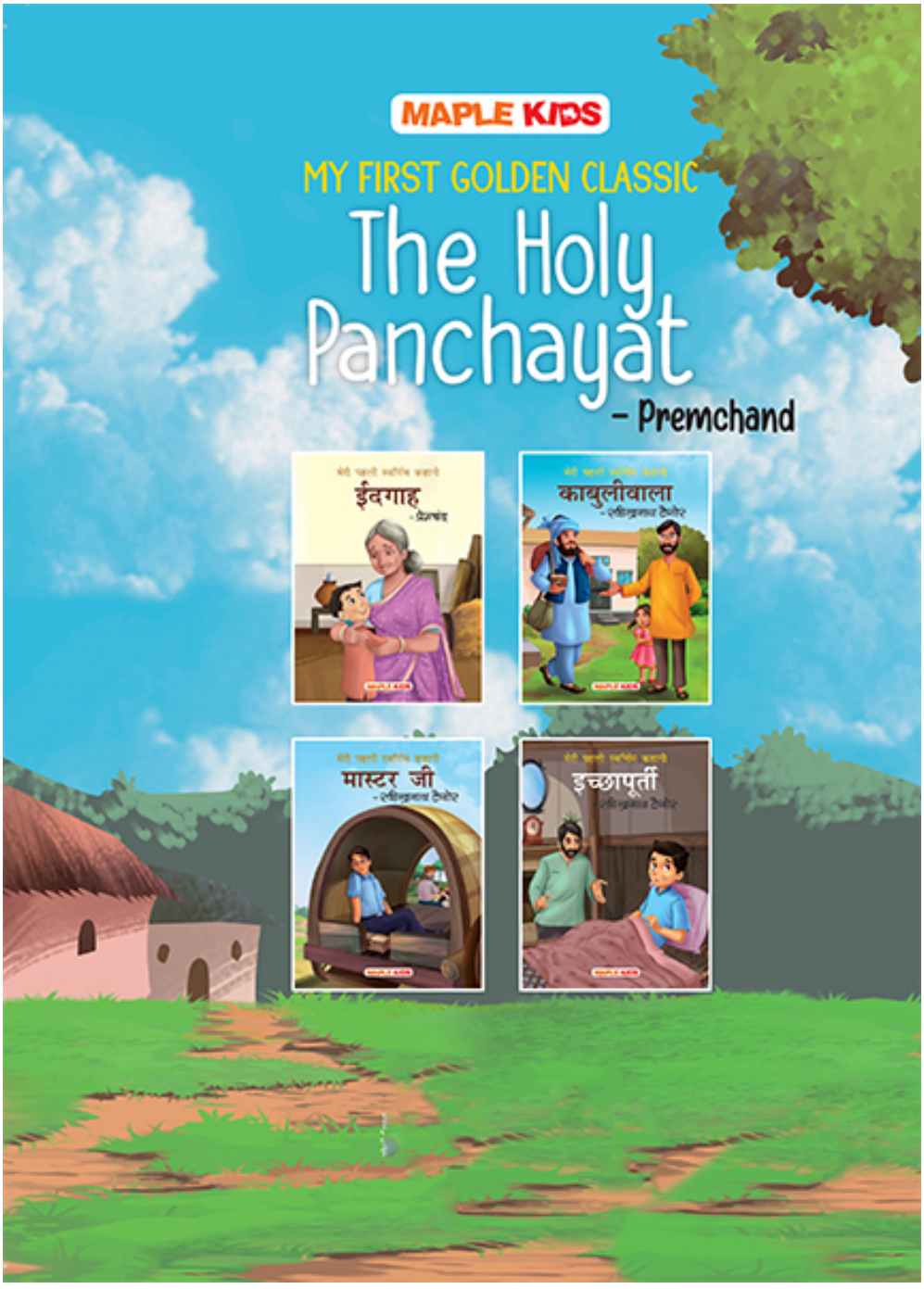
Finally, they decided to let the panchayat settle the matter. Algu asked Sahu to select the panchayat head. Aware of their enmity, Sahu selected Jumman as the head.

Jumman saw this as his chance of seeking revenge. But, as soon as he took the position as the head of the panchayat, he realized that he had a responsibility. After listening to both the parties, Jumman announced that Sahu had to pay the full price of the ox to Algu. “The ox was healthy when Sahu had taken it from Algu and died because it was ill treated. If he would have paid on time, this dispute would never have occurred!” he said.

Algu was happy with the decision. He stood up and shouted, “Victory to Panch-Parmeshwar!” The slogan echoed from all sides.

Jumman hugged Algu and said, “I considered you my enemy, but when I became the panchayat head, I realized

that justice was the only thing that mattered. Brother, please forgive me." Algu's tears washed away the bitterness in their hearts.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